

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 10425 041331Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 SP-02
COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /034 W
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R 040918Z AUG 78
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO USDA/FAS WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2207
USLO PEKING

UNCLAS HONG KONG 10425

TOFAS 188
FOR GRAIN & FEED DIV
FM AG OFFICER

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR
SUBJECT: PRC EARLY RICE

1. KWANGTUNG PROVINCE FAILED TO FULFILL THE PLAN TO INCREASE THE HARVEST OF SPRING CROPS AND EARLY RICE THIS YEAR. THUS, THE LATE RICE HARVEST MUST BE EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD IF THE PROVINCE IS TO REAP A BUMPER HARVEST FOR THE WHOLE YEAR. MANY PLACES REPORTEDLY HAVE DONE COMPARATIVELY WELL IN THE PRODUCTION OF LATE RICE; HOWEVER, LATE RICE PRODUCTION HAS NOT BEEN HIGH IN A NUMBER OF PLACES AND "SOME PLACES EVEN LACK CONFIDENCE IN BEING ABLE TO REAP ANOTHER BUMPER HARVEST OF LATE RICE" (CANTON, 7/31/78).

2. COMMENT: KWANGTUNG, CHINA'S LEADING PRODUCER OF EARLY RICE, HAD A POOR EARLY RICE HARVEST LAST YEAR BUT BETTER THAN AVERAGE HARVESTS OF SPRING GRAINS (PRIMARILY WINTER WHEAT AND SWEET POTATOES) AND LATE RICE PUSHED 1977 TOTAL GRAIN OUTTURN TO AN ALL-TIME HIGH (CANTON, 12/16/77 AND NCNA, 1/1/78). LATE RICE NORMALLY DOES NOT YIELD AS WELL AS EARLY RICE IN KWANGTUNG. IN VIEW OF THE EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD HARVEST OF LATE RICE LAST YEAR,
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IT APPEARS UNLIKELY AT THIS EARLY DATE THAT THE CROP THIS YEAR CAN COMPENSATE FOR A SHORTFALL IN THE OUTTURN OF BOTH SPRING HARVESTED GRAIN AND EARLY RICE.

3. CHINA'S EARLY RICE HARVEST WAS DISAPPOINTING LAST YEAR AND THE OUTLOOK FOR THIS YEAR'S EARLY RICE CROP IS GUARDED. IN THE EXTREME SOUTH, FUKIEN AND KWANGSI, LIKE KWANGTUNG,

EXPERIENCED WINTER DROUGHT AND UNUSUALLY CLOUDY, DAMP, AND COOL SPRING WEATHER. KIANGSU, ANHWEI, KIANGSI, HUPEH, HUNAN, AND CHEKIANG PROVINCES IN CENTRAL CHINA HAVE ALL REPORTED DROUGHT, VERY HOT TEMPERATURES, AND DRYING WINDS. DROUGHT AND INSECTS REPORTEDLY WERE DAMAGING CROPS IN SZECHWAN AND "IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO GRWO LATE AUTUMN CROPS IN A BIG WAY TO MAKE UP FOR LOSSES CAUSED BY NATURAL DISASTERS (CHENG TU, 7/23/78).

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